

Advertising to Modern American Nomads

Charles E. Bass III

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Dr. Kathryn Pounders

Stan Richards School of Advertising and PR

Supervising Professor

Ryan Romero

Stan Richards School of Advertising and PR

Second Reader

Abstract

Author: Charles E. Bass III

Title: Advertising to Modern American Nomads

Supervising Professor: Dr. Kathryn Pounders

The term Nomadism has historically referred to a variety of lifestyles, however in 21st century United States, the phrase has taken new light. As a response to the traditional American dream structure a fringe group of “Modern American Nomads” has emerged, particularly amongst the millennial generation. This group skillfully utilizes the systematic and technological innovations of the modern world to conduct a distinctly evolved form of nomadism. Through careful observational and empirical research this work attempts to build psychographic and demographic profiles of this culture and the individuals that exist within it. Specifically, a series of informal interviews was conducted with five Modern American Nomads to identify their attitudes about brands and advertising. These interviews were carefully analyzed with the goal of identifying emergent themes. The outcome of the interviews and subsequent analysis was to develop a comprehensive recommendation of the most effective branding, messaging, and media strategies for advertisers to appeal to Modern American Nomads.

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Introduction

The beginning of the Twenty-first century can best be characterized by a massive increase in globalization, innovation, and change worldwide due to the technological revolution of the 1990s. In the United States, a highly evolved version of nomadism has emerged as the result of resources, income, inter-connectivity, and restlessness. Modern American Nomads are significantly distinguished from every preceding form of nomadism in that their lifestyle isn't the result of a necessity to satisfy material needs like food and water, but instead a desire to meet higher-level needs like esteem, belonging, and self-actualization.

No extensive Academic body of work has been conducted to examine this particular group. To address this issue, this study combines an academic literature review, an observational study, and five in-depth interviews. Specifically, after the literature and the observational data informed the structure of the depth-interviews, which was to gain insight into how Modern American Nomads interact with brands, advertising, and behave as consumers. The third section of this work carefully analyzes these themes, and explores their significance.

The final section will provide a recommendation to advertisers, which aims to appeal to these Modern American Nomads. This comprehensive recommendation will be the result of careful considerations from the academic, observational, empirical, and interview sections of this work. With the goal of helping create the most effective creative, branding, and messaging strategy for advertisers to utilize in appealing to these Modern American Nomads.

Background Information

I. Academic Information

Traditional Nomadism

To begin the discussion of Modern Nomadism, it is important to provide a thorough discussion on Nomadism in the most general sense: what it is, what it isn't, how it occurs, and how it has evolved. The term 'Nomad', according to the *Dictionary of Human Geography*, is defined as:

"An individual who lives a member of a people or tribe that has no permanent abode but moves about from place to place, usually seasonally."¹

Traditionally this has taken place in several different capacities. Based on the ways in which the nomadic individual interacts with their environment, one can distinguish the hunter-gatherer, the pastoral nomad owning livestock, or the modern peripatetic nomad categories. In 1995, there were an estimated 35 million traditionally nomadic individuals living in the world. Traditionally, these individuals have most often traveled in groups of families called bands or tribes, which are typically based on kinship ties.

The most primitive of these groups, the hunter-gatherers, follow seasonally available wildlife and game in a very systematic manner. In practicing this ancient human subsistence form, hunter-gatherers lead an extremely isolated life apart from established global structures. They are entirely removed from economic interaction with the outside world and are entirely independent in terms of resources. An example of

¹ Gregory, Derek. *The Dictionary of Human Geography*. Malden, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

this lifestyle is the San people who live in the grasslands of Botswana, and still conduct a very primitive form of hunter-gathering that is paralleled virtually nowhere else.

The second group of nomadic peoples, Pastoralists, conduct lifestyles that are centered on raising, driving, and moving with herds, in extremely strategic patterns to avoid the depletion of resources. They are moderately connected to outside society economically through selling their livestock and the other things they produce. The most well documented and chronicled group of Pastoralists are the horse-based Mongolian herding groups.²

The third traditionally nomadic group commonly referred to as “gypsies” refers to the various itinerant populations who move about in densely populated areas. These individuals are can be uniquely distinguished from other traditional nomadic groups based on the characteristic that they are not living on natural resources, but instead through bartering, offering services to the resident population, and sometimes even crime. Due to the nature of the gypsy lifestyle, the level of interaction with sedentary people from this group is relatively high. Perhaps the strongest example of this is the Romani people who function primarily in Central and Eastern Europe.³

In recent history, particularly the 20th century, a process of sedentarization has occurred in some capacity amongst all of these groups. Sedentarization is defined as the gradual abandonment of nomadic practices in an attempt to integrate into more mainstream society. This phenomenon has occurred as the result of several factors: the massive explosion of urbanization, the exponentially increasing gap in quality of life standards experienced, the disappearance of home ranges and rise in population levels,

² Pastoral Livestock Development in Central Asia, FAO Rural Development Division

³ Rao, Aparna (1987). The concept of peripatetics: An introduction. Cologne: Bohlau Verlag. pp. 1–32.

environmental conditions that have shifted feasibility, and political institutions that have severely handicapped the ability of nomads to maintain high degrees of nobility. An example of this has occurred amongst the Bedouin tribes that formerly populated much of the Middle East. In 1963, UNESCO registered that about 10% of Iran's 20 million person population was classified as nomadic. Since then the massive Cultural Revolution experienced in Iran has drastically shifted the tides, and in 2008 it was estimated that this same group now made up roughly 2.2% of the population.⁴ This same thing has occurred in Mauritania, where at independence in 1960 it was essentially an entirely nomadic society at 85% being nomadic herders. Since then the great Sahel droughts of the early 1970s caused massive problems and today only 15% of the population maintains this nomadic culture.⁵ In summation, the traditional forms of Nomadic living are disappearing at a high rate globally, which have been greatly precipitated by the modernization of the planet.

Coinciding with the very same modernization that has occurred globally over the past century, new forms of nomadic living have begun to develop. Although maintaining some of the same fundamental characteristics as traditional forms of nomadism, such as high mobility and community groupings, this new style of nomadism is otherwise drastically different in every other capacity. The evolving nomadism in the Western culture is explained below.

⁴ Ali akbar Dareini | The Associated Press. "Iran's Nomads Going Extinct." Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles Times, 18 Feb. 2008, articles.latimes.com/2008/feb/18/business/ft-irannomads18. Accessed 5 May 2017.

⁵ "Mauritania - POLITICAL POWER IN THE MID-1980s". Accessed 5 May 2017.

What is Modern American Nomadism?

The purpose of this following discussion and research is to provide a solid definition and description of Modern American Nomadism.

Modern American Nomadism in the most basic sense can be distinguished from other nomadic forms based on three features. First, Modern American Nomadism is in fact 'Modern'. It is a new, growing phenomenon that is in no way isolated from the modern 21st century world, but instead thrives due to technology, interconnectivity, equipment, access to resources, and wealth. Second, Modern American Nomadism is a uniquely American phenomenon, and for the purpose of this discussion, it is important to note that this phenomenon is a product of American society, ideals, values, people, and possessions. In many respects, Modern American Nomadism is the newest step in the evolution of nomadic living, and can be particularly distinguished from the other forms of traditional nomadism by the fact that it is not a 'need-based' lifestyle, but instead opted into by choice.

Individuals here have chosen to live a semi-nomadic lifestyle, not out of necessity for survival, but instead for something more. Survival should be understood as meeting the basic human needs (food, water, shelter, etc.) that must be obtained to live. These individuals have chosen nomadism to satisfy their wants as opposed to satisfy their needs. This choice is a key indicator and distinguishing characteristic of this particular form of nomadism.

According to the work of William Straw, a well-acclaimed sociologist, a 'scene' is a cultural notion/phenomenon. Furthermore, Straw states that this cultural notion exists within a much larger society, but is not however indicative of that society or wholly the result of it. As noted in his work *"Cultural Scenes." Loisir et société/Society and*

Leisure“, the term scene designates particular clusters of social and cultural activity without specifying the nature of the boundaries which circumscribe them”(413)⁶.

Modern American Nomadism is a scene-taking place in the 21st Century American West, and the group of people the researcher will be discussing are those that currently compose that scene. In order to understand this scene more deeply, the subsequent distinctions will build boundaries for understanding this scene’s parameters, inner workings, and behavior.

At the surface this scene is bonded by a mutual desire to spend a great deal of their time in the outdoors and the claiming of the American West as a sort of home. Although not being confined to a particular geographic spot, these people aggregate in areas that exude the most “desirable” and “accessible”⁷ natural features and qualities. National Parks and Forests, Public Lands, and BLM lands are meccas for finding congregations of these individuals.

Demographic and Behavioral

Modern American Nomads are primarily Americans between the ages of 20-35, falling under the greater academic umbrella and cultural label of “Millennial.” Millennials have been most critically noted and characterized for possessing the following seven traits: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional,

⁶ Straw, Will. “Loisir Et Société/Society and Leisure.” *Cultural Scenes*, 2004, pp. 411–422.

⁷ Straw, Will. “Loisir Et Société/Society and Leisure.” *Cultural Scenes*, 2004, pp. 411–422.

pressured, and achieving.⁸ Considering this, it is important to note that these modern nomads are predominantly young white adults. This assumption is substantiated by the combination of several different variables. According to 2015 Census data, 57% of all Millennials are White.⁹ According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, similar to other generations the millennial "one percent", those individuals with the largest amount of disposable income, is comprised of 84% white individuals, only 28% of which are female.¹⁰ Essentially, in order to successfully conduct this lifestyle financially, the individuals we are discussing must live within, or very close to, this one percent. Furthermore, according to that data those that exist within this realm have an 84% chance of being white and a 72% chance of being male. As a result of the time period in America in which they grew up, this generation and thus these Modern American Nomads have experienced the highest levels of wealth, standards of living, and education that have ever occurred within the country, all of which have enabled them to achieve this lifestyle.

This sub-sect of individuals has not been deprived of either formal or informal systemic barriers to economic, academic, or social advancement. This distinction is important, because it clarifies that these individuals do not participate in this lifestyle out of any sort of necessity. They have not been forced into a semi-nomadic style of

⁸ Howe, Neil, and William Strauss. "Millennials Go To College." The Gardner Straw Group (2000). Web. 5 Apr. 2017.

⁹ Frey, William H. "Diversity Defines the Millennial Generation | Brookings Institution." Brookings, Brookings, 15 Sept. 2016. Accessed 5 May 2017.

¹⁰ Wile, Rob. "Wealth Gap Calculator: Are You in the Millennial One Percent?" Fusion, 3 Feb. 2015. Accessed 5 May 2017.

living by anyone or anything. Anthony D'Andrea, a leading professor on the study of migrant people, makes this clarification through the following discussion:

“Many of them have abandoned urban hubs where they enjoyed a favorable material status (income, stability, prestige), and migrated to semi-peripheral locations with a pleasant climate, in order to dedicate themselves to the shaping of an alternative lifestyle. Certainly, they retain the cultural capital that would allow them to revert to previous life schemes if necessary.”¹¹

Although in this particular excerpt he is discussing the habits of global modern nomads, the same characterization can be applied to the group of Modern American Nomads, because there are certain systematic and logistical conditions that require this kind of mobility. The ability to travel at will and spend the majority of one's time conducting preferable leisurely activities, these individuals are likely to hold a high level of economic prowess. Their purchasing power can either be attributed to self-generated wealth (as would be characteristic of highly-educated professionals) or it can come from alternative sources (trust-funds, families, etc.). Regardless of the source, possession of this is essential to existence of these Modern American Nomads.

In sociology the term “cultural capital” refers to the social assets of a person (education, intellect, style of speech and dress, etc.) that promote social mobility in a

¹¹ D'Andrea, Anthony. 2006. “Neo Nomadism: A Theory of Post Identitarian Mobility in the Global Age.” *Mobilities* 1 (1): 95–119. Howe, Neil, and William Strauss. *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group (2000). ISBN 9780375707193.

stratified society.¹² These assets can also be understood as their social or cultural prowess. In reference to the previous excerpt from D'Andrea, when he refers to their "[retention] of cultural capital", he is pointing out a very important differentiation between these individuals and traditional nomadic people. Cultural capital acts as a measuring stick for the ability of an individual to exist and operate freely within a society, and is comprised of all of the things that society considers rare and worth seeking.¹³ Cultural capital can be as simple as understanding of social norms or as intricate as the possession of college education. The retention of cultural capital is crucial to Modern American Nomads. It is a key distinguishing feature between them and traditional nomadic groups. In essence, Modern American Nomads aren't forced into their lifestyle because they can't fit into normal society, much like the average American might imagine when they think of vagabonds, mentally-ill homeless, drug-addicted homeless, and hobos. Modern American Nomads instead possess the means and ability to prosper in mainstream American society, but opt out. The retention of cultural capital allows them to flow freely between mainstream American society and their nomadic communities with relative ease.

Another distinguishing feature of these individuals is their economic existence. In knowing that these Modern American Nomads individuals belong to the millennial generation, analyzing and understanding millennial economic behavioral data carefully will help further establish the parameters that make up this group. As stated before, the

¹² J.P.E Harper-Scott and Jim Samson (2009). *An Introduction to Music studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 52–55.

¹³ Gregory, Derek. *The Dictionary of Human Geography*. Malden, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

economic ability of these Modern American Nomadic individuals is high. This economic prowess is a necessity to their ability to conduct their lifestyle in an effective manner. Further, the possession of this ability at such a young age implies that they must have experienced relative financial success earlier than their predecessors. Goldman Sachs released a report in 2016 stating, “individuals between the ages of 20-25 have a 5% higher mean income that their counterparts did 15 years ago,”¹⁴ the implications of this are interesting. As a population younger millennials are making more money than previous generations. This increase in income also results in an increase in disposable income. With access to more money, resources, and ability to utilize those in an effective manner, these younger millennials are set up in a perfect position to conduct this Modern American Nomadic lifestyle. Since these younger millennials have more wealth than individuals in their age group have ever experienced before, they also have a greater amount of resources to spend on leisure activities than any group ever before. This results in a proclivity towards larger leisure activities and nomadic-style living.

Millennial economic behavior should be used as a means of more formally understanding the actions and psyche behind Modern American Nomads. A Mintel report on “Millennial Leisure Trends” released in 2013 shows that millennials as a whole are spending 34% more on leisure activities than they were 5 years ago. In that report, 48% of the millennials sampled expressed that they prefer to spend their leisure time actively, and 49% of them noted that their preferred leisure activity is “outdoor

¹⁴ Goldman Sachs. "Millennials Infographic." Goldman Sachs. N.d. Web. 05 May 2017.

experiences, such as hiking and other experiences”.¹⁵ These reports offer a great deal of insight into the mindset of these millennials, and further ripen the case that Modern American Nomadic individuals are a product of this generational group. In conducting their lifestyle, Modern American Nomads spend nearly all of their resources on leisurely activities and as the data from this Mintel Report shows, millennials are allocating an increasing percentage of their funds in the same direction. Further, because Modern American Nomads live a lifestyle based around camping and squatting, they are able to spend nearly all of their time doing outdoor leisurely activities. The above report similarly revealed that nearly half of the millennials sampled prioritized outdoor leisure activities. Essentially, millennial views on leisure activities and spending mimic that of Modern American Nomads. Millennials prioritize the allocation of their resources towards leisure, prefer active activities, and prefer activities that involve outdoor experiences to all others, which aligns entirely with the behavior of Modern American Nomadic individuals.

The previous two distinctions, one, that Modern American Nomads have a high degree of cultural capital, and second, that they are in an economically advantageous position are important. The combination of these two variables provides a foundation and means for these nomads to exercise their dispositions about what an ideal life looks like. In her book, *The Crowded Nest Syndrome: Surviving the Return of Adult Children*, American sociologist Kathleen Shaputis labeled Millennials as the “Peter Pan Generation”. Her reasoning lying in the perceived tendency of millennials towards delaying some rites of passage into adulthood for longer periods than most generations

¹⁵ Grabowski, Gretchen. Mintel. “Millennials' Leisure Trends.” Feb. 2013.

before them.¹⁶ These “rites of passage into adulthood” that Shaputis references are the achievement of certain milestones that have been widely accepted as being characteristic of a “successful adult”, such as attaining a stable career, getting married, buying a house, and establishing a family. This trend has resulted in the emergence of a new life stage, dubbed “Emerging Adulthood”.¹⁷ In Lusk’s article she references sociologist Larry Nelson who noted:

“In prior generations, you get married and you start a career and you do that immediately. What young people today are seeing is that approach has led to divorces, to people unhappy with their careers.”¹⁸

Essentially because of their interaction with the world through the formative years of their life, millennials have developed a worldview that is averse to the traditional American dream structure. The psychological opposition that millennials possess to this system creates a desire to escape from it and in attempting to do so; they are more likely to spend more time in the “Emerging Adulthood” phase of life.

The delay of these the rites of passage discussed above is one of the very things that enable Modern American Nomads to live their lifestyle. This is the precise stage of life that Modern American Nomads occupy; they are the manifestation of this life phase. The “rites of passage” for Modern American Nomads are thought to be quite different compared to the mainstream society milestones. They are much more focused on cultivating unique personal experiences. The same postponing of marriage and

¹⁶ Shaputis, Kathleen. *The Crowded Nest Syndrome: Surviving the Return of Adult Children*. Clutter Fairy Publishing, 2004. Print. ISBN 978-0-9726727-0-2

¹⁷ Brittani Lusk (5 December 2007). "Study Finds Kids Take Longer to Reach Adulthood". Provo Daily Herald. Retrieved 24 August 2010.

¹⁸ Brittani Lusk (5 December 2007). "Study Finds Kids Take Longer to Reach Adulthood". Provo Daily Herald. Retrieved 24 August 2010.

career development that millennials exude, allows these Modern American Nomads an immense amount of mobility and freedom to conduct their lives without confining ties to one geographic location.

Geography

This scene occurs primarily in the Western United States, which for the purpose of this research is defined as all states west of Kansas. Modern American Nomads operate almost exclusively in this area.

The most famous examples of this in recent history have occurred in Yosemite National Park, the Moab area and the east Sierra Nevada Mountain region in California. In the case of Yosemite, the massive granite walls and seemingly infinite climbing opportunities set the scene perfectly for an outdoor enthusiasts' appetite. Since the early 1960s a small and steadily growing group of devote rock climbers have deemed Yosemite as a strange sort of pilgrimage site. As cataloged in the documentary *Valley Uprising* by Peter Mortimer, and countless other films, the scenery as well as its particularly unique set of features almost "magnetically draws" these Modern American Nomads in, and secures a strange idyllic place within their hearts and psyche. However, since 2003 the National Park Service has enforced a 7 night per calendar year staying limit which has severely hampered the ability of individuals to "squat" here with any sort of legitimacy. On another note, since the early 2000s, the public land surrounding Moab Utah has steadily received an exponentially growing amount of attention from these Modern American Nomads. Just as Yosemite garnered such allure with its natural splendor the large canyons, walls, arches, and gorges surrounding Moab offer a one of a kind experience. This has resulted in the emergence

of semi-permanent squatters residing out of their vehicles on Bureau of Land management in 30-day stints. The places that these Modern American Nomads aggregate towards act as meccas, or pilgrimage sites. Amongst these meccas, these individuals live in a loose-knit community with one another, which consistently shifts in size, make-up, and location.

These outdoor meccas serve a vital role in the existence of Modern American Nomadism, and act as a strange sort of accelerator to this lifestyle. These meccas also provide a common place for meeting and exchanging ideas, typically offering the broad range of natural features and opportunities that lure Modern American Nomads into leading this lifestyle (such as rock climbing, fishing, hiking, as well as unique geographical formations). These ‘meeting points’ essentially serve as a sort of infrastructure for the growth and continuation of this lifestyle. According to the Bureau of Land Management, there are over 245 million acres of public domain land in the American West, 27 million of which are fully open to the public.¹⁹

In between these group aggregation meccas exists another sort of space these individuals occupy, and squat in. When in between a destination they are working towards these nomads often gravitate to areas they can sleep or squat on for free. Whether it be a Walmart parking lot, a rest stop on the side of the highway, or a buddy’s couch the primary object behind these landing places appears to be their affordability, and as a consequence their ability to allow them to maintain their lifestyle. Online communities and blog forums, such as rewild.com and Campendium.com, have even arisen amongst these individuals that allow them to share information and tips

¹⁹ www.blm.gov

about how to conduct this calculated form of squatting.²⁰ The importance of this is behavior lies in the distinction that these nomadic people aren't merely confined to the aforementioned "meccas" but are also fulfilling the same lifestyle when in between destinations.

Summation

Modern American Nomads have simply chosen to step out of the traditional American dream structure of climbing corporate ladders, upward mobility, and economic advancement. Opted for a seemingly lower "standard of life", at least materially, than they are arguably able to achieve, in hopes of satisfying whatever their motivation is. A subsequent effect of this, these individuals are obviously more prone to mobility and establishing roots later in life than people were 20 years ago. This fact is even further accelerated by a report posted by Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research that shows that it's not just homes these individuals are averse to, but rather all high investment luxury items. The Goldman team suggested that they are instead "turning to a new set of services that provide access to products without the burdens of ownership, giving rise to what's being called a "sharing economy"."²¹ These reports should provide at least some basis for understanding how differently these individuals behave in the marketplace than the rest of American Society.

The primary activity that makes this group a group is their coherence to the common activity of living a mobile lifestyle. They do not have a permanent piece of

²⁰ New Internationalist. "The Facts." New Internationalist, Apr. 1995, newint.org/features/1995/04/05/facts/. Accessed May 2017.

²¹ Goldman Sachs. "Millennials Infographic." Goldman Sachs. N.d. Web. 05 May 2017.

property, real estate, or anything that they live in and operate out of. Instead their geographical location is consistently changing. This is a key indicator of an individual of this group. However, they do have possessions. In fact, they probably have their own “private comfort zone,” but it has taken the form of something like a car, tent, motorcycle, van, or another item instead of being a traditional home. They choose to live on the move. Although the frequency of their relocation may vary between days and months, they never establish any specific physical location as their permanent home.

Additional Clarifications

Although not an indicating factor, it is common that these individuals treat their lifestyle choice with a sort of idealism, especially in the way they portray it to others. They usually share their experiences frequently with people both in and outside of this culture through some sort of medium, whether storytelling, social media, writing, photography or something else. Their use and leverage of social media to allow them experience and continue experiencing this lifestyle is key. Many of these people have relatively large online and social media presences that accompany them

Although avoiding entangling attachments that tie them to one place, these people exist within a community of likeminded individuals. Their community is focused on sharing and experiencing this lifestyle with one another, and this is assumedly their first point in connection with one another. This community exists amongst their connections with one another, rather than in one physical location and should be understood as such.

II. Observational

Observational Notes and Target Group Discussion

Within the researcher's experiences he has encountered, seen, and interacted with individuals in this group in several ways. The first, and most intimate, being personal friendships the researcher possesses with individuals who have opted to pursue this lifestyle. The stories heard, behavior observed, and living situations witnessed firsthand familiarized the researcher with this phenomenon. Secondly, the researcher's interaction with these individuals through the Internet has been extensive. The typical "larger-than-life" social presence they possess through various social media spheres, as well as personal blogs, has crafted a compelling narrative that the researcher initially tuned into several years ago. Perhaps the most interesting part of this is the amount of reach these individuals have amongst the mainstream population through these avenues.

Interpersonal Relationships

The following section provides documentation of several observational cast studies the researcher conducted of several Modern American Nomads. The purpose of these studies is to build an understanding into the less formal inner workings of these individuals life, for the purpose of creating a more holistic understanding of who they are and how they operate.

a. Callen and Abbi

Take for example Callen, who decided about a year ago to move into his medium-sized Subaru SUV with his wife and dog. When they moved into their car, they left the suburban Houston area and headed towards the Western States. In doing so, so haven't been simply bouncing from hotel to hotel, but instead hanging out in groups of like-

minded individuals in aesthetic meccas like Moab, Joshua Tree, and Yosemite for several week stents at a time.

Since launching, their main form of income has been portrait photography. This has been sustainable because of their marketing efforts on various social media outlets. On social media, they document their lifestyle, the places they go and things they experience. They use it to stay connected with others that are engaged in similar forms of living, and essentially build up their personal brand.

On their blogs, Abbi thoroughly documents their experiences, the places they go, and the people they are with. On several different occasions she has noted that the people they're with were met online. Continuing to say that they initially established their relationship purely through digital interest in each other's lifestyles, which then translated to desire to have real-life experiences with one another. Often detailing how "amazing" or "surprising" it is to have met so many people that are living similarly to her and Callen.

Callen began a smaller-scale version of this lifestyle during his time at UT, where he lived without a lease or permanent residence for over 2 years. During this time he hopped between friend's houses, occupying their closets, backyards, couches, or even front yards in one-month intervals. During the weekends he would travel with the band he was a drummer for. This was sustainable because he minimized all of his possessions to fit into his 1998 Ford Mustang. He cataloged his experiences through videos he posted to YouTube, Facebook, and various other social media. In these videos he discussed the difficulty of this lifestyle whether it was environmental opposition, time demands, or uncertainty.

He would give the owners of the property small goods like toilet paper and soft drinks for letting him take up some of their space, and people responded extremely

well to this seemingly uneven trade. A friend of his, Mark Stenberg, noted one time that they loved having Callen stay in their backyard because he never inconvenienced them. He talked about how Callen didn't just mind his own business in his tent and maintain his own affairs, but instead engaged in the lives of the people that lived in Mark's house. It was this sort of involvement and selflessness that enabled Callen to hop around so freely.

b. Jake Dapper

Jake is another case of this Modern American Nomadic behavior. Although he doesn't exactly exemplify it the way that Callen and Abbi do, particularly in the way they broadcast their lifestyle to the massive public.

In terms of education, he also falls in the category of very educated, having graduated with Bachelor of English from UT. Since graduation, Jake has had a couple different corporate job opportunities in Austin, but instead has opted for seasonal employment leading backpacking trips during the summer in Colorado. In between these seasons has operated fully out of his Subaru outback, mainly in the Austin area, couch surfing and camping outside of friends' houses.

Just like Callen and Abbi's, his lifestyle requires a great degree of help, cooperation, and resources from the community of people he lives in. He asks for a little bit of help with shelter, and in exchange offers non-monetary services like cleaning or maintenance.

c. Brett Lewis

Brett Lewis, who worked for several years in the Austin area, migrated around the city in a variety of capacities. He saved money on rent by living in a tent for quite a while on several different properties, and bought an old beat up Volkswagen Van. He

remodeled this van, documenting the entire process on various social media outlets, and gaining a relatively large following extremely quick. He then capitalized on this attention by building a brand around the account, selling merchandise, and even renting out this van to individuals as a sort of hotel. The money he gained from this venture he then reinvested in nomadism, buying a new Dodge Sprinter van, which he currently lives in.

d. Genevieve Poist

Genevieve occupies this lifestyle in a slightly different capacity than the others. Unlike Callen, Abbi, and Brett she does not broadcast her lifestyle through a social media at all, and hasn't utilized it to further enable her travels.

She hasn't had a permanent place of residence for the last two and a half years. She is undoubtedly more educated than others that typically occupy this lifestyle, holding a BFA from the University of Maryland, and an MS in Civil Engineering from UC Berkeley. This level of education exemplifies the previous discussion concerning possession of cultural capital Modern American Nomadic. Genevieve has opted for seasonal employment as a backpacking guide in Colorado over the past two summers, although she could certainly utilize her qualifications to acquire a much more prestigious occupation. In between summers she lives full-time out of her Honda CRV, splitting her time between the Berkeley California area, Austin, and Michigan squatting at friend's homes.

It is this group of individuals and people like them that this paper aims to explore. From what the researcher has encountered there seems to be an increasing amount of attention given to them by mainstream American society, There are countless news

articles, commercial and personal sites, and social media accounts dedicated to documenting these Modern American Nomads. As a consequence of this growth in attention two important points arise. First, the level of exposure mainstream America has to this lifestyle may result in an increasing population converting to this form of living. Second, the increasing level of attention given to them strengthens the voice they have in culture. It is for these two reasons, and several others that will be discussed later on, that the following exploration into their involvement with brands and advertising is important and worth attention.

The previous case studies on these Modern American Nomads point towards a couple of key points. These Modern American Nomads were raised in the traditional American society and have chosen to step outside of it. Their education level is high, their socio-economic origin is relatively affluent, and they all seem to utilize some type of unique economic venture to continue their nomadic behavior. Understanding these things, the following section is devoted to carefully crafted interviews in hopes of gaining deeper insight into the minds of these Modern American Nomads.

Empirical Data

I. Informal Interview Questions

Goal: To create a base of knowledge about how Modern American Nomadic individuals interact with brands, advertising, and behave as consumers. For the purpose of, creating a calculated, informed analysis about how companies can begin to appeal to them.

General Information (Table 1.1)

1. What's your age?
2. Relationship status?
3. Where are you from?
4. What's your ethnicity?

5. What Socio-economic class were you raised in?
6. What level of education have you received?
7. How long have you been/were you nomadic?
 - a. Why? Life event? Life switch?

Brand Loyalty (Table 1.2)

8. Is a brand's identity or reputation important to you? Why?
9. Would you call yourself brand loyal? Explain.
 - a. If YES, name the top 5 brands you associate yourself with.
 - b. To what degree do you think **your peers** influence your brand loyalty?
 - c. To what degree do you think **individual companies** influence your brand loyalty?
 - d. What makes a brand appealing to you?
10. What brand have you recently been turned on to?
 - a. Why? What caused this?
11. What brands have lost your loyalty?
 - a. What caused this?

Advertising (Table 1.3)

12. How do you feel about advertising? Do you like it? Why?
13. Do you notice ads? When?
14. What kind of advertising works best for you? Why?
 - a. When did advertising most recently generate a purchase? Why?
15. What form of advertising do you immediately disengage with? Or when do you feel like you don't notice it? Why?
16. How do you respond to social media advertising?
 - a. Do you find that blatant social media promotion turns you away from a brand?
 - b. Do you follow a lot of social media influencers? Do you pay attention to their posts?
 - c. Why?
17. What percent of your purchases would you say were in some way the result of advertising efforts?
18. Name a couple advertising campaigns that you feel have worked on you? Why did they work?
 - a. Do you feel like you don't even notice advertising?

Economic activity (Table 1.4)

19. What's your net income per month?
 - a. Is this steady or does it vary?
 - b. How much of that income is disposable?
20. What's the main area of your life you spend money on? (Recreation, family, travel, etc.) Why?
21. How would you describe your spending habits?
 - a. Do you find yourself buying the same thing repeatedly?

- b. Do you mainly buy things in store or online?
 - c. When are you more likely to purchase in store? Why?
- 22. What percent of your income do you think goes towards things other than necessities?
 - a. What are those things?
 - b. Why?
- 23. What criteria do you use to evaluate a purchase?

Time information

- 24. How many hours a week do you spend watching TV?
 - a. On social media?
 - b. Elsewhere on the Internet?
 - c. Reading printed publications?
 - d. Driving your vehicle?

II. Methods

The above interviews were conducted over the phone with individuals that all live Modern American Nomadic lifestyles. The interviews were recorded and the results of them are documented in the tables in the Appendix section at the end of this document.

The interviews were structured in four separate pieces, each aiming to gain a particular insight into the behavior of Modern American Nomads. The first section documents general information to provide a brief background of the individual being interviewed. The second section aims to gauge the behavior and interactions of these individuals with brands. The third section was crafted to gain an insight into the outlook and involvement of these Modern American Nomads with advertising. The fourth section then addresses the economic behavior and decision making of these individuals. The four sections of interview questions were given in this order with the goal of obtaining increasingly deep answers as the interviews occurred.

Analysis

I. Advertising

This part of the analysis focuses on how Modern American Nomads interact with advertising and references the interviews documented in *Table 1.3*. In analyzing the discussions with this sample group, a general theme regarding their sentiments towards advertising became evident. These individuals do not like traditional advertising.

Initially, the informants shared an overall negative view towards advertising. Through an exploration into what the term “advertising” means, it became evident that the informants were describing the traditional form of advertising, which refers to advertising that utilizes a key sales pitch to sway the favor of consumers into purchasing their products. As Jill stated, this type of advertising usually feels “manipulative”, “intrusive”, and as she later noted is “an ugly addition to the world”. Such a strong response must clearly come from a history of experience with traditional advertising and a strong opinion about it. Through further conversation it became evident that much of the advertising that she and others in the group had been exposed to used this traditional method that promoted blind, uninformed consumerism. This distaste for mainstream American consumerism, shared by several in the group, is characteristic of Modern American Nomads. Therefore, it is safe to assume that at least a portion of this distaste with traditional advertising forms and methods stems from one of the key psychological distinctions of this group: their rejection of the traditional American Dream structure. As a result of living a different lifestyle than the average American adult, Modern American Nomads’ interactions with media channels look different as well. They spend less time watching TV, reading printed publications, and

more time being exposed to Out of Home billboards than the average American consumer would be.

In conjunction with the rejection of traditional advertising, most of the sample group noted that they prefer advertisements that use nontraditional methods. This can manifest itself in several different avenues. Members of the sample group stated that they believe branded content is the method of advertising that “works best” on them. During the interview discussion Billy noted that branded videos showing the “lifestyle and feeling behind using a product” help him grow fonder of a brand. He cited a particular case of Yeti coolers purchasing and publishing videos that third-party fishermen have been making of their fishing trips. In doing this, Yeti didn’t provide the individuals in the videos with any supplies or funds for production, however at some point during the clip some of their product may have appeared. Yeti then inserts a subtle branding trademark at the end of the clip. He noted that these videos felt natural, real, and non-manipulative and for that reason he was attracted to them. This same feeling of positivity about this type of behavior was shared in Reagan’s comments about how she loves when she sees brand’s “come alongside an industry as a whole” with advertising. By this she was referencing the level of involvement and commitment to an industry that a brand expresses. If the brand feels committed to both the glamorous and the grimy parts of a certain industry, than their message and appeal becomes more authentic, and thus more attractive. This type of branded consumer-generated content seemed to leave an extremely positive impact on these individuals.

In reference to nontraditional advertising channels, all members of this group noted that they frequently interacted with social media advertisements. A majority of the group noted that they like these advertisements because they feel sincere. After further exploration into this incite, a very interesting point became clear. Social media

advertising is potentially the medium that influences their perceived image of a brand most. The most direct form of this is sponsored social media advertising placement, in which brands have the opportunity to buy advertising slots within the social media platform that appeal to users that are flagged for expressing potential interest. This form obviously has its pros and cons. As noted in the discussion with Chris about the employment of “blatant” social media advertisements by brands, the sponsored bar (a feature on Instagram) tends to leave a “not so good” taste in your mouth, however “if it’s warranted then it’s a little more understandable”. Paralleling Chris’s sentiment, Jill similarly explained that if she feels like she, “didn’t warrant the content [she] immediately rejects it”. Both of them stated that this type of sponsored advertising within social media almost always draws their attention, yet the reception of it often varies based on how “targeted” they feel. There is a fine line advertisers must walk with this sort of media placement if they hope to attract consumers while simultaneously avoid deterring others.

The other major form of social media advertising occurs through the employment of social media influencers. Social media influencers are individuals with massive followings on social media platforms. As a result of these followings, each post they release has a massive reach and audience. Through this type of social media promotion brands supply these influencers with their products and often these influencers to post positive endorsements of their brand. On the surface, this form of promotion is inherently less intrusive than the aforementioned. The majority of the sample group noted that they follow “a lot” of social media influencers. This following is usually based on some sort of loose connection they have with the individual, typically a friendship they share from some other life circle. Billy noted when discussing these individuals that, “their product plugging typically doesn’t work on me, but I definitely

notice it. I feel pretty removed from wanting those items”. Several other individuals within the sample group expressed similar sentiments to that of Billy, and therefore two important conclusions can be drawn from this. First, these individuals follow and nevertheless notice the branded content being promoted through social media influencers they are aware of the message at some level. Second, the level of impact that social media influencers have on these individuals is small, as pointed out by Billy’s assertion that he “feel[s] pretty removed from wanting those items”.

Social media advertising that targets Modern American Nomads does possess a unique advantage. The sample group noted that they prefer when advertising builds a culture and lifestyle around a brand, and social media does that best. The constant flow of messaging and the level customizability that brands can push towards consumers through proper utilization of social media allows them to establish that brand identity that these individuals said they prefer.

Another noteworthy fact is that every member of the sample group claimed that fewer than 50 percent of their purchases are the result of advertising efforts, and the majority of them noted percentages significantly lower than that. From this fact arise two possibilities: either these individuals are unaware of the degree to which they are influenced by advertising efforts or they are actually extremely uninfluenced by advertising. Regardless, the fact is that direct purchases immediately following exposure to advertising are not a reality for these individuals. It can therefore be assumed that efforts like point-of-purchase advertising online are not an effective tool to reaching these individuals, and should thus be avoided.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, every member of the sample group when asked to recall an advertising campaign that they believe “worked” gave an example of a campaign where an outdoor brand revealed their core values by firmly proclaiming

their stance on a particular issue. None of the campaigns that were listed were directly discussing benefits of the brand's products but instead asserting a position the brand stood by. The Patagonia campaign "don't buy this jacket" discussed by Jill, actually directly claimed to discourage consumers from purchasing more of their products in an attempt to assert the brand's pro-environment recycling policy. Another example is the REI "Opt-Outside" campaign discussed by Reagan, in which REI closed all of its' stores during the biggest consumer shopping day of the year in order to assert the companies position of anti-consumerism. The actions of these two brands resonate well with these individuals, which is evident by the clarity the informants had when discussing these brands. Furthermore, these campaigns and others like them possess qualities that we have previously discussed as being extremely effective at reaching these individuals. They serve to build their respective brand's authenticity, transparency, and ability to relate to their target market's beliefs. Essentially, through discussion with the sample group it was evident that campaigns that possessed all of these qualities are by far the most effective at reaching them. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that similar campaigns should be understood as being extremely effective with Modern American Nomads as a whole.

Recommendations

Through conducting interviews with this small sample group of Modern American Nomads and analyzing the ways in which they engage with brands and advertising, several themes about their behavior became very evident. Modern American Nomads make most of their purchases on a utilitarian basis, are extremely brand loyal, engage with social media very differently than previously thought, have a large aversion to

traditional advertising, and fully support brands that are congruent with their beliefs. Understanding that these Modern American Nomads behave in a unique way is fundamental to brands who want to appeal to them.

First, an explanation of why Modern American Nomads is a lucrative target market will be explained. These individuals live a lifestyle that is seen by many as unobtainable and enviable. As a consequence, people outside of this lifestyle pay close attention to their actions, possessions, and behavior. The utilization of social media by these Modern American Nomads as a tool to communicate with one another, as well as put their lives on display to the greater public is profound. Many of these nomads have massive followings on various social media platforms, and use these accounts as a sort of journal documenting their day-to-day activity. They post frequently and skillfully. Through social media, they often communicate directly with their followers, which deepens the strength and impact their posts have on their followers. As a result of the large amount of attention they receive, the products shown in their posts start to be viewed as essential to this lifestyle, and envious followers begin to idealize these brands. Therefore, if a company is able to gain a strong foothold of support amongst these Modern American Nomads they also gain a profound amount of word of mouth exposure through them. The same romanticized gaze that these nomads receive from their loyal followers will also be translated over to the brands that are seen as fundamental to their experience. Essentially, the messages put out by these Modern American Nomads have a large reach, high frequency, and demanding presence. Therefore, the integration of a brand's products into this messaging can greatly increase exposure and ultimately sales. The economic possibilities in this are paramount.

Companies aiming to appeal to these Modern American Nomads in an effective manner must carefully focus the main strategy behind their messaging. The primary

goal behind their messages must be establishing a deep, meaningful bond with the consumer (Modern American Nomad). As seen revealed through the interviews conducted with these Modern American Nomads, they have a large aversion to traditional advertising. This form of surface level product messaging has a negative connotation for these individuals. Therefore, a brand hoping to appeal to them must blatantly avoid this sort of advertising. As also revealed in the analysis section, the largest amount of influence that individual brands possess in influencing brand loyalty amongst these individuals actually occurs after the product has been introduced to them by a peer, and is most effective when the brand attempts to appeal to them a deeper more personal level. Therefore, if a brand hopes to gain the favor of these Modern American Nomads, their primary focus should be to avoid surface level advertising and instead penetrate more deeply into causes and beliefs that are important to these individuals.

To avoid surface-level interaction with Modern American Nomads a brand should carefully calculate the avenues through which it sends them messages. First, as shown in the analysis section Modern American Nomads do not spend a great deal of time watching TV or reading printed publications, therefore advertising executions that utilize either of these avenues should not be prioritized. As travel is obviously fundamental to their lifestyle, exposure to billboards is relatively high, but several of the individuals within the sample group noted that they don't especially notice them. The largest arena that these individuals use to interact with the outside is by far social media, as shown through the data collected from the sample group. There are several insights into this observation that are extremely relevant to understanding how they engage with social media fully. In terms of social media advertisements, these individuals have a general aversion to "blatant" paid promotions. Several individuals

within the sample group indicated that in general, the “sponsored bar” attached to paid social media promotions leaves an overall bad taste in their mouths. Further, they also noted that there is a fine line that these ads walk on between feeling warranted and intrusive. Overall, their effectiveness at generating a positive reaction to a brand is low, because they often feel very placed, scripted, and forced. However, the other prominent method of social media advertising proved to possess some effectiveness. The sample group said that advertising through social media influencers sometimes held some value to them. They noted that when product endorsements by social media influencers felt organic, they typically respond well to them. This plays into the key insight that these nomadic individuals above all else value brand messaging that displays authenticity.

In tracking with the analysis of the sample group and the previous recommendations it is evident that there is a particular type of advertising that is most effective with these Modern American Nomads. If a brand hopes to effectively attract these individuals they should focus their advertising efforts on building an identifiable culture and identity to their company. The individuals in the sample group overall seemed to be more concerned with the feeling behind a brand, and what that brand stood for, then simply the products and corresponding benefits that brand offers. If these nomads can find something within the brand’s identity and beliefs they can closely identify with, then they are most likely to quickly assimilate into loyalty.

Advertisers aiming to appeal to Modern American Nomads should create campaigns for companies that take a unique stance on an issue, and then subsequently announce the brand’s efforts to address that issue. A campaign that does this would make a fundamental claim about what the brand believes in and how it makes efforts to support those beliefs and advance them in the world around them. A perfect example

of this was Patagonia's "Don't Buy This Jacket" campaign that was released right before Black Friday in 2011.²² With this campaign, the brand urged consumers to buy less. Taking this type of countercultural stance on the surface seems like a very preposterous move, however, this shock factor is exactly what made this campaign brilliant. Patagonia used a bold claim urging consumers not to buy their products in order to draw attention to the company's position of anti-consumerism and environmentalism. They used copy in several of their prints to talk about how even the things they produce are bad for the environment. Through extensive detailing of their environmental blunders, Patagonia displayed its transparency. Following the release of the campaign the company then took steps to improve the impact they make on the world, and in doing so they deepened their credibility even further with followers. It was this very multi-layered process that made this campaign such a hit, and can certainly be credited with some of Patagonia's recent success. In this campaign, Patagonia took a stance on the issue that was on brand with the company culture and made a bold effort to address that issue. In doing these two things Patagonia directly nailed all of the fundamental criteria for building Modern American Nomadic brand loyalty. Patagonia displayed transparency by owning up to its environmental blunders and authenticity by following through to fix those issues. Through its efforts to directly fight environmental change following the release of this campaign, Patagonia even revealed the niche it serves in the outdoor clothing industry. This niche gives the brand a feeling of higher significance and helps instill a deeper belief for why it exists. These distinguishing actions undeniably had a large impact on Modern American Nomads; most of the sample group listed the company amongst the top five they identify with. A crucial piece that

²² <http://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/ad-day-patagonia-136745/>

made this campaign even more brilliant was Patagonia's alignment of the company's culture right alongside the culture of outdoor-minded individuals. In directly discussing and take steps towards environmentalism Patagonia pulled on the heartstrings of every Modern American Nomad. They hit on an issue that is obviously near and dear to their hearts and propelled themselves into a position of authority on the topic.

Essentially, if a company hopes to capitalize on the unique opportunity that advertising to Modern American Nomads is and do so effectively, they must carefully navigate a narrow path. The first step is creating a clear and thought out purpose behind why the brand exists, as well as the niche within society it is meant to fill. Out of this purpose, advertisers can then begin to build a brand culture. This brand culture should be based on the feelings that using and interacting with the brand are supposed to evoke. For example, if a brand's identity is an environmentally responsible surf wear manufacturer, then their brand should elicit those sort of feelings amongst consumers. In attempting to do this, as well as reach Modern American Nomads, the best route to take is the production of branded content, videos, stories, narratives, and images. If carefully curated, all of these pieces can work together to elicit the desired associations in the minds of Modern American Nomads effectively. An effective real life example of this has been done by the brand YETI, which manufactures coolers. Through diligently sponsoring content creation on multiple levels, YETI has successfully taken the role of high-performance fishing cooler in the outdoor gear marketplace, even though there are several competitors producing similar products.

Next, the advertiser for this company should strategically choose the most important cause that their brand shares in common with the Modern American Nomad.

Once this cause has been carefully chosen, the advertiser must then give the brand a unique take on that notion. Whether this is accomplished by directly going against the established grain for how a brand should interact with that cause, or by slightly diverging from the pre-existing path. The important thing is that the advertiser gives the brand a unique position on the particular notion, which only it owns. This is vital for several reasons. The unique position differentiates the brand from its competitors. Differentiation inherently gives the brand at least some degree of value in the eyes of consumers. This is particularly important for brands whose products are not significantly differentiated in design and performance from their competitors. The divergence from the norm serves to grab the attention of consumers, in particular the Modern American Nomad.

After these steps are completed, the advertiser should then begin to choose the avenues in which they are going to disseminate the stance they have chosen. The media mix here is important. The advertiser should utilize this media mix to announce the unique position they have previously selected. Provided the findings regarding social media, the brand should utilize social media resources carefully to display branded content that aligns with the brand, but in a way that feels organic. Two main focuses in creating executions of the chosen campaign should be highly prioritized. First, the executions should convey an authentic presence that is true to the brand. The content that is being created and pushed towards these consumers should feel natural as if it is a product of the preexisting brand culture. Secondly, the most effective way to do this is through transparency. Just as Patagonia acknowledged their own experience with the cause they took a stance on and owned up to their own environmental blunders, the brand pushing the campaign should do the same. The brand should detail their

experience with this cause and then offer a recommendation for the change they want to see. This is where the final step comes in.

Following the initial release of the campaign, the brand must persist in the position it has taken. For example, if the brand asserts that they are anti-consumerism then the brand must behave in a way that is consistent with this sentiment. This is not to say that every campaign released after this one should simply reiterate their stance on the given cause in some capacity. However, it is vital that the brand is careful not to contradict itself. Maintaining a consistent culture and image in the eye of consumers, especially Modern American Nomads is vital to retaining and continuing to foster brand loyalty. As all of the individuals in the sample group noted, one of the main turn offs from continued loyalty towards a brand is faltering in authenticity. Brand loyalty is built on trust. That trust has to be earned, and the easiest way to earn that trust is through content consistency. If the brand choses to diverge from the position they have taken, they risk that trust may be broken, which will likely result in negative outcomes.

In sum, the advertiser can hugely benefit a brand from effectively advertising to Modern American Nomads. To effectively do so, it is essential that the advertiser carefully builds a compelling brand narrative that the consumer not only believes in, but wants to be a part of. Through tactful social media manipulation, the brand should champion a cause that aligns with their existing identity. The advertiser should utilize this medium to display both the brand's authenticity and transparency in the stance they are taking, as well as cast a vision for where the brand wants to see that cause go. It is crucial that brand's position is uniquely their own, and that the cause they are pushing feels like it serves some greater need in society. The narratives, built around this campaign should feel organic and interesting. If the advertiser can does this well,

they will be able to show that the brand fulfills a crucial niche within the industry that it dwells, and generate immense economic benefit for the brand.

Conclusion

The advent of increasing globalization, innovation, and change worldwide has brought about a highly evolved version of nomadism in the United States. These Modern American Nomads are significantly distinguished from every preceding form of nomadism, and their position on the fringe of society has placed them in the limelight of envy to a largely mainstream audience. According to the academic literature review, observational studies, and in-depth interviews documented in the body of this work, it is evident that they are uniquely special group of consumers that is extraordinarily beneficial for brands to target.

Existing mainly within the Millennial generation, these individuals distinctly diverge in their economic behavior, worldviews, and place in the economy. The increasing focus of American society on social media has placed this group into a brand influencer role, which if capitalized on correctly, can be extremely profitable brands. Concerning themselves mainly with purchasing goods on a strictly utilitarian basis,

breaking into the buying agenda of these Modern American Nomads is definitely a difficult task.

Advertisers wishing to capitalize on appealing to these individuals must follow a strict system of campaign building. The placing of a high priority on authenticity, transparency, and utility on brands by Modern American Nomads demands advertisers to give close attention to the thoroughness upon which they craft a brand's image. That being said, the image of a brand is everything to these individuals. Modern American Nomads are in search for brands they can believe in. In order to most effectively craft a creative, branding, and messaging strategy to appeal to Modern American Nomads, advertisers must prove the brand's value to them

Appendix (Tables)

Table 1.1: General Information

	Chris	Jill	Reagan	Billy	Jack
18. What's your age?	25 years old	29 years old	26 years old	24 years old	25 years old
19. Relationship status?	married	complicated	single	in a relationship	single
20. Where are you from?	San Antonio, TX--> most time spent in Utah and Arizona desert area	Baltimore, MD--> most time spent in California area	Wimberly, TX--> most of time currently in California	Austin, TX	Austin, TX
21. What's your ethnicity?	White	White	White	white	white
22. What Socio-economic class were you raised in?	the 1%	middle	middle	middle	middle
23. What level of education have you received?	bachelor's degree in marketing	masters degree in civil planning	Bachelor's degree from Texas A&M	high school, some college	Bachelor's degree in English
24. How long have you been/were you nomadic?	9 months	6 months	3 years	a year, not ending soon	8 months
a. Why? Life event? Life switch?	because work/life balance is ideal, get to do work they love, establish friends in tons of places, allows opportunities for preferred personal growth with new experiences and what not.	fear of commitment. Feels confined by staying in one place permanently. In transitional phases like jobs.	job opportunity to be a outdoor guide, allows her to travel for a couple months at a time around the state of California that really aligns with her interests	because he doesn't see purpose in spending money on rent and feels like it's a loss. Also thinks its fun and keeps his day-to-day routine simpler and easier	wanted to save money and hated paying for rent. Thought it would be a good excuse to spend time with different friends and not feel bogged down.

Table 1.2: Experience with Brand Loyalty

Brand Loyalty	Chris	Jill	Reagan	Billy	Jack
1. Is a brand's identity or reputation important to you? Why?	Yes, especially with outdoor gear and pertaining to outdoor gear. Better stuff	yes, wants to associate self w brands that portray lifestyles she agrees with	yes, if its focuses around quality and ethically sound. Catered to her interests.	yes, into stories behind brand and why they exist.	yes, but not a ton. It's not the only motivator behind a purchase.
2. Would you call yourself brand loyal? Explain.	gear--> yes. Food--> not so much. Clothing--> yes, technical clothing. Equipment electronics--> yes	yes.	yes. If the brand has earned it from use	yes	yes, but not extremely, like it doesn't take much for a brand to lose his loyalty
a. If YES, name the top 5 brands you associate yourself with.	Addidas Terrex, Canon camera, Sony camera, Pendleton, Black Diamond	Patagonia, Everlane, American Appearal, coffee brands, apple	Patagonia, Nalgene, Joe Lynn swimsuits, Marmot, Osprey	Patagonia (mainly for everything), Kammok	Western Mountaineering, Arc'teryx, Chaco, MSR
b. To what degree do you think your peers influence your brand loyalty?	"fairly significantly". Examples of gear that works for other people weighs heavy	significantly. The select few closer friends she values opinion of highly, opposite amongst larger group	high. Friends with similar lifestyles that share opinions have large influence. Take opinion seriously	not that much. He feels like he's independent from a lot of people	a very high degree, atleast with brands I'm not already committed to or am exploring interest in
d. What makes a brand appealing to you?	authentic presence, high quality in manufacturing, intended use in how they market it, recognized by peers	brands that are anti-consumption, materialism and capitalism	things that are a necessity and are focused on quality.	if he feels like they serve a niche purpose and solution in the world.	how well regarded and manufacture d they are. I want whatever it is to work and do it for a long time
3. What brand have you recently been turned on to?	Cliff Bar, because cliff reached out to them to generate content for them.	not a lot. Fairly set with the brands she likes and doesn't waver much	La Sportiva	none recently	Subaru

a. Why? What caused this?	n/a	maybe if a close friend is super tied to one she'll give them more attention	friend recommendation	because he mainly is just focused on the brands he's already comfortable with	I had a lot of peers recommend them based on their reliability and affordability
4. What brands have lost your loyalty?	Fayettechill	Everlane	Teva, Poler Stuff	yeti	Pepsi
a. What caused this?	low quality of goods, failure to establish clear business relationships and stuff. Unprofessional.	lack of transparency, and news coming out about them misrepresenting themselves.	they proved that their quality wasn't really as high as she thought.	he feels like they are falsely presenting themselves and the market they belong in. feels inauthentic	recent advertising efforts reveal how manufacture the image they're trying to convey is.

Table 1.3: How do These American Nomads Respond to Advertising?

Advertising	Chris	Jill	Reagan	Billy	Jack
5. How do you feel about advertising? Do you like it? Why?	depends on ad. Like new age ads based around consumer / product narrative. If he relates to that individuals lifestyle	Generally doesn't like it. Feels manipulative, very intrusive. Data mining feels strange	thinks it's a cool tool for companies to relate to consumers with and because of that serves a good purpose	he finds it annoying, because of the negative impacts on self esteem it can have	doesn't particular mind or feel effected by it. If its an extreme effort it makes an impression.
6. Do you notice ads? When?	if he watches TV ads he loathes them and they are blatantly intrusive. He likes social media ads that feels genuine	notices them a lot, everywhere. Mainly on social media. Instagram feels very blatant.	not really, because feels removed from forms of media placement	no. when he does its mainly on internet and caters to something he's already looking for	only when I feel like they are unique and do something I've never seen before
7. What kind of advertising works best on you? Why?	n/a	Authentic brand ambassadors that feel genuine. Probably not paid but instead actually love brand.	when a brand comes alongside an industry it coincides with and encourages it in every capacity	videos. Branded content that show lifestyle and culture behind a brand.	videos and branded content. It helps foster a deeper identity behind the brand
a. When did advertising most recently generate a purchase? Why?	feels like its more impactful when he already knows he has a need and is looking for something to satisfy that need. Ex: his drone	concert or event posting. Sort of a news posting.	Teva sandal, thought they looked good	yeti. Their branded lifestyle fishing videos he finds himself watching a lot.	Subaru
8. What form of advertising do you immediately disengage with? Why?	immediately disengages with tv product plugging style	things that are poorly designed and not genuine feeling. If it looks poorly crafted. "ugly addition to the world".	TV ads that feel insincere and routine	billboards. Feel routine, if it feels outdated and not unique, because a lot of them look the same. Like Chick-fil-a ones	stale advertising that feels like it's the same for every brand. Like truck or watch ads
9. How do you respond to social media advertising?	likes it better than other ad types	if it feels very personal she likes it	thinks its obnoxious.	it gets him more interested	it doesn't really bother me

a. Do you find that blatant social media promotion turns you away from a brand?	sponsored bar leaves "not as good taste" but when it feels like its warranted you're more likely to understand.	if she feels like she didn't warrant the content being pushed towards her then she rejects it immediately	feels invasive when its super targeted towards her.	Sponsored promotions work well if they are catered to his other interests. Very likely to click on, when its small brand pushing an identity it feels better	if they are interesting and don't feel too invasive or overly intrusive then I really enjoying viewing them.
b. Do you follow a lot of social media influencers? Do you pay attention to their posts?	yes. Doesn't read a lot of captions. Follows influencers he's more closely linked with. Female pays more attention to words than he does.	yes. follows people that she feels loosely attached to. Very selective with who. Has criteria. If it feels authentic she is more inclined	not really unless she has some sort of tie to them and has an outside reason to follow them besides their promotion	follows ones he knows. Their product plugging doesn't necessarily work on him, but he definitely notices it. Feels removed from wanting those items	not a ton. "I mainly follow them if they feel unique from other ones. Like if I feel like I benefit in some capacity from following them versus others"
c. Why?	pays more attention when he is searching for a solution to a need he has already realized about himself	n/a	if their posts feel like they are inauthentic to the actually product they are pushing she thinks it almost generates a negative response to the brand	If it feels fake and very arranged, he gets annoyed. He mainly is just happy for his buddies that are getting sponsored	n/a
10. What percent of your purchases are in some way the result of advertising efforts?	maybe 25%	100% because everything is result of effort. Explicit Adv--> less than 50%	maybe 20%	low. Like 5%. Doesn't feel like he buys a lot of stuff	40%
11. Name a couple advertising campaigns that have worked on you? Why did they work?	Adidas-- "live w/o limits" pushes home technical gear quality he highly values	Patagonia--> "don't buy this jacket" anti consumption, pro environment campaign. Was very informing	REI--> "opt outside" campaign. That promoted an anti-consumerism sort of message. Don't buy excess	GoPro--> they came out with a bunch of insane videos and sold people on the idea that they can do the same	Patagonia--> "Worn-Wear campaign, which promotes reusing the products that purchased

Table 1.4: What is the Economic Behavior of Modern American Nomads

Economic Activity	Chris	Jill	Reagan	Billy	Jack
12. What's your net income per month?	\$4k	\$1.5k	around \$1k a year	\$2.5K	\$2k
a. Is this steady or does it vary?	fluctuates based on photo gigs. If there's brand work then its more steady	changes per month, no fixed jobs. Mainly freelance	varies a lot based on partial jobs. Every week is different.	steadyish	varies based on freelance gigs he's able to get
b. How much of that income is disposable?	higher percent is disposable b/c no rent. Main fixed cost is gas and food. Few savings	not a lot of it. Mainly bills and stuff. Maybe \$100-200	virtually none of it.	large amount because he cuts back on everything he purchases	around 25%
13. What's the main area of your life you spend money on? Why?	gear (camera stuff), skydiving	food, gas, phone	necessities. Food mainly	food. And tools	food and gas
14. How would you describe your spending habits?	evaluate based on cheapest deal unless its equipment	reluctant consumer. Constant buyers remorse	doesn't buy anything. Tries to make existing possessions last as long as possible	looks for the cheapest deal for everything so he can make other purchases whenever he wants	If it serves an immediate need or has a large degree of entertainment value
a. Do you find yourself buying the same thing repeatedly?	routine things--> same food and groceries. Very fixed.	yes. Find things that work and continuously follow that pattern. Lot of time on front end developing pattern	yes, gets in purchasing grooves that streamline process	yes. Same foods, same items to replace broken ones I liked	not really
b. Do you mainly buy things in store or online?	mainly in store.	90% in store	always in store	always in store	in store
c. When are you more likely to purchase in store? Why?	if it's a bigger purchase then they'll buy online.	bigger, more premeditated purchases definitely in store	always, because no permanent address.	hates buying online. Doesn't feel personal. Or engaged with product	He only buys stuff in store. Never online, doesn't trust it
16. What criteria do you use to evaluate a purchase?	very utilitarian. Evaluate options to satisfy need best with best price. Like optimize deals	very utilitarian. Tries to maximize the amount that something covers a need per dollar	need based. If it solves a problem then she will buy it. How badly if needs something increases	if it has a warranty. Also, if he feels like his money is going towards a better cause he's more	peer reviews and general reputation of the product are huge in deciding if it's worthwhile

	utility over other things.	view everything as investment			
Time information					
17. How many hours a week do you spend watching TV?	0	3	0	2	2
a. On social media?	20	8hrs	14	12	17
b. Elsewhere on the Internet?	5	20	3	5	15
c. Reading printed publications?	0	3	2	4ish	3
d. Driving your vehicle?	25ish	10	30	10	15

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Biography

Charles Bass spent the last four years pursuing dual degrees in the Plan II Honors and Creative Advertising programs at the University of Texas at Austin. At a young age, Charles became particularly interested with the outdoors through Boy Scouts and this passion persisted throughout his time at UT. From leading water activities at a summer camp, to walking pipeline in West Texas for an oil company, to guiding backpacking trips in Southern Colorado, all of his summers were spent holding occupations that furthered this passion.

Most recently, Charles has split his time generating campaigns for the Creative Portfolio sequence and generating freelance content for several different outdoor companies based in Austin. Projects in both arenas fed each other deeply and provided mutual inspiration.

He doesn't exactly know what the future holds following August of 2017, but one thing is assured: he will find some way to maximize his exposure to nature, probably through Modern American Nomadic techniques.